

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, undated, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. 1890? Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County, Cape Breton, N. S. My dear Mrs. Bell:

I was ever so sorry not to come down for Christmas as I hoped and expected.

I had been looking forward especially to my Christmas dinner with you and Mr. Bell and the children, and it was hard to forego the pleasure. But Alec thought it best, and indeed I agreed with him.

Alec and I had a very quiet Joan and Darby Christmas together. I didn't even know that we were to have any sort of dinner, but Mr. McInnis was scandalized at the idea and sent us up a nice turkey, so we had a good dinner. On Friday we had a Christmas tree for all the people and the youngest sewing-school children. The tree decorations were very home-made, as my stock was in a very dilapidated condition, but I am not so sure that the tree was much less the prettier in consequence. We made over forty candy bags of bright colored silks, and we had at least seventy-five rosy checked apples and a good many little presents and candles, so that altogether the tree looked well dressed and gay. The special feature was the Christmas fairy, a tiny girl clad all in white and with big white wings growing out from her shoulders. On her head was a white sugar-loaf hat and on her dress sprays of Christmas green. We put her under the stage and she came up out of the trap door, a demure little mite, self possessed and perfectly at her ease. She curtesied to right and left and then sprang lightly down from the stage, and running across the room struck the curtain which swung back displaying the blazing tree. Then perched on 2 a table she dispensed candy bags, apples and presents to right and left to the envy and admiration of the other little mites, none of whom however were as pretty as she.

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Afterwards we had the excitement and delight of rescuing the steamer May Queen from a rather perilous situation close to the Coffin Island reef. The night was intensely dark and foggy and the Captain could see nothing. In his anxiety to escape Speclock Island he went way up the Big Bras d' Or near the Coffin Island reef and only found their true position when hearing their signal for help, we began ringing our bell. We rang every now and then, answering their whistle, until at last she hove in sight right under the cliffs to the left. We thought she must be the Marion from Sydney she was so far that way. It was so warm that we all staid out on the verandah watching her. Truly this is an artic climate, the snow and ice all gone and the ground soft. Now I must wish you and Mr. Bell a Happy New, which I do with all my heart (a part of it however??) and pair of it here.

Much love to my cousins,

Lovingly, Mabel.